

PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Kicks Off STEM Week At Dearborn STEM Academy

Thousands of students across the Commonwealth to participate in STEM Activities from Oct. 22 to 26

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

Executive Office of Education

Governor's Press Office

MEDIA CONTACT

Brendan Moss, Press Secretary, Governor's Office

Phone

(617) 725-4025 (tel:6177254025)

Online

gov.press@state.ma.us (mailto:gov.press@state.ma.us)



BOSTON — Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito kicked off the inaugural statewide STEM Week at the Dearborn STEM Academy this morning, highlighting the importance of education in science, technology, engineering and math and its impact on the Commonwealth's economy. They were joined by Secretary of Education James Peyser, Congressman Joe Kennedy, Vertex Chairman, President & CEO Dr. Jeff Leiden, Boston Public Schools Interim Superintendent Laura Perille and Dearborn Academy Principal Dana Brown. The STEM Council is co-chaired by Lt. Governor Polito, Congressman Kennedy and Dr. Leiden.

During the week, students across the Commonwealth will take part in hands-on projects, STEM-focused lessons, robotics events, coding projects and field trips to local employers. Pre-schools, elementary, middle and high schools, as well as colleges, museums, libraries, community groups and other organizations planned hundreds of events in every region of the state. Businesses partnered with school districts to showcase STEM careers, and educational institutions organized week-long projects for students at various schools across Massachusetts.

"The Commonwealth's first annual STEM Week will be an opportunity to showcase the hands-on projects and lessons that go into STEM education all year long," **said Governor Charlie Baker.** "Equipping students with knowledge and experience in STEM subjects will help prepare them for success and fortify Massachusetts' future workforce and economy."

"We have made progress in the last few years boosting the prominence of STEM subjects in our schools and we look forward to continuing to increase the number of young women and underrepresented minority students studying STEM subjects," **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito.** "We hope STEM Week will highlight opportunities that will inspire more and more students to get involved in these important fields."

Massachusetts has the most technology jobs per capita in the nation, and STEM occupations represent 17% of all employment in the Commonwealth. Despite the abundance of jobs in science, technology, engineering and math, just one in six American high school seniors say they are interested in studying STEM in college.

During the next 10 years, U.S. industries will demand one million more graduates with STEM backgrounds than the nation's educational system will generate, according to the 2012 report from the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.

The Dearborn is a Boston Public School that serves nearly 500 students in grades 6-12. All students develop an understanding of concepts that are pervasive across all STEM fields, and graduate with an awareness of STEM disciplines and career pathways. In 10th grade, students choose one of three pathways to focus their studies: computer science, engineering, or health and life sciences.

"Throughout this inaugural STEM week, our Commonwealth's students will illustrate how far they have pushed the boundaries of our STEM curriculum," **said Congressman Kennedy**. "And as we celebrate their breakthroughs, innovation and awards, we recommit to expanding that opportunity to every student that calls Massachusetts home. At a time when women, minorities and low-income students remain underrepresented in STEM careers, the STEM Council is committed to an education system where gender, race, income and zip code are no longer barriers to access."

"We are sitting in a sea of talent in schools across the Commonwealth, but right now we're only developing a small part of it - too many students are getting left behind," **said Dr. Jeffrey Leiden, Chairman, President and CEO of Vertex**. "If we're going to develop the diverse workforce that our innovation economy needs, we have to provide students with hands-on learning opportunities that bring STEM subjects into the real world and make learning exciting and fun. That's what this week is all about."

Strengthening STEM education in all of the Commonwealth's K-12 schools is a priority of the Baker-Polito Administration. Lt. Governor Karyn Polito co-chairs the Massachusetts STEM Advisory Council, along with Congressman Kennedy and Jeffrey Leiden. The STEM Advisory Council is appointed by the Governor and includes education and business leaders in STEM industries that work to promote STEM education, partnerships among industries and schools, and internships for students.

"STEM Week is an opportunity to showcase all the good work teachers and students are already doing in science, technology, engineering and math every day," **Education Secretary James Peyser said**. "It is also a chance to spark some students' interest, and highlight for them how STEM touches so many fields and so many professions."

STEM Week is a collaborative effort with the STEM Advisory Council, which worked to generate interest from the business community for STEM Week activities around the Commonwealth, and foster partnerships with school districts. The state's Regional STEM Networks planned and coordinated activities for the week in conjunction with the STEM Advisory Council. Regional STEM networks connect educators, community leaders, and industry partners in order to foster opportunities for students in STEM fields.

Today, Lt. Governor Polito, Congressman Kennedy and Dr. Leiden co-wrote an [op-ed](https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2018/10/21/need-train-more-women-and-minority-students-for-careers-stem/c8zaxFETADcQvU5em5MVPO/story.html) (<https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2018/10/21/need-train-more-women-and-minority-students-for-careers-stem/c8zaxFETADcQvU5em5MVPO/story.html>) published in the Boston Globe highlighting the importance of training more women and minority students for careers in STEM.

Approximately 500 STEM events will be held at schools, colleges, museums, businesses and other venues across the Commonwealth this week. To find an event by region, go to www.massstemweek.org (<http://www.massstemweek.org/>).

To find out more about STEM Week or see list of events by region, visit www.massstemweek.org (<http://www.massstemweek.org/>).

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Focus on STEM education during week in October aimed at sparking student interest and knowledge

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